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Farm members meditate during Sunday services.

The Bell Ringer

Vol. 32, No. 2

MONTGOMERY BELL ACADEMY, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

November, 1975



Farm children feast on soybean pancakes.

The Farm: An alternative lifestyle

By Geoffrey Chazen
and Ken Witt

As the students drove on through the brisk October morning, they began to wonder what they were doing. The object of their trip was The Farm, located near the middle Tennessee hamlet of Summertown. They had started with the vague intention of doing a little free-wheeling reportage on an alternate life-style, but doubt as to how they would be received and how they would make their inquiries soon arose. Preconceived notions about the nature of The Farm and its inhabitants disturbed them. What would these "freaks" and "escapists" with their more or less conservative views think of them, five pampered preschoolers, the "running dogs" of capitalism?

However, the unaffected warmth of their reception—"Good morning, we've been expecting you. You folks sure picked a cold day to come down here"—and their later experiences rendered their fears irrelevant. They remained ill-at-ease, though, among all those bearded faces, and they were still unsure regarding what they wanted to discover about The Farm. In a nut-shell, what is The Farm really like?

Poverty and Harmony

Besides the apparent friendliness and harmony among all of the people, the most striking impression left by The Farm is poverty. Most buildings appear make-shift and crude. There is no indoor plumbing and few of the multitude of conveniences so dear to the hearts of Americans. Miscellaneous bits of rusting machinery lie strewn about. In fact, many things on The Farm seem to emanate a sense of ephemerality, as if they would collapse if one made too sudden a movement.

Nevertheless, functionality is behind the shabby appearances. The houses may look unfinished, but they are sturdy and well-insulated; the scattered machinery is to be expected in a large operation such as The Farm. One can discern that the overall ascetic characteristics of The Farm reflect a deeper kind of functionality: a devotion to an ideal or function which underlies the very reason for the existence of... But this is just stale rhetoric, totally unsuited to providing an accurate glimpse of a living, growing organism, which happens to be composed of 750 people. One needs a

little background to approach an understanding of The Farm.

Stephen Gaskin is the leader of the commune. As a "spiritual teacher" in San Francisco, for five years Gaskin conducted a "Monday night class," in which he talked of "God, religion, politics . . . all that" to a group of 1500 to 2000 people. The original members of The Farm came to Tennessee about four years ago, sharing a devotion to Gaskin and a desire to stay together in a spiritually based community. They chose to establish a farm because, in Gaskins words, farming "seems to go along best with a spiritual life." He added, "Creating food and interacting with the soil seemed to be a clean relationship with God and the universe."

A Non-Thoreauian Approach

The people of The Farm conduct enterprises other than farming, however, and the farming operation itself is not exactly a simple, Thoreauian approach. The Farm contains 800 acres of tillable land and the members sharecrop on the land of 35 other local farmers. Nine tractors and a combine are used in raising and harvesting the crops. Food is sold in various vegetable stands in Nashville, Franklin, and other locations. The Farm even owns a tractor-trailer rig, which is used to ship soybeans and other crops. More importantly, The Farm sent thousands of dollars' worth of food to Spanish Honduras for disaster relief after a 1974 hurricane, and

it is actively involved in arranging shipment of food for needy people. A shipment of food for Haiti is now in the works.

Some of the other activities of the members of The Farm include: work crews, who perform various types of jobs, such as construction, outside of the farm; a metal-scraping operation; and a printing outfit (The Book Publishing Company), which has marketed several books, one of which sold over 75,000 copies.

The Verbal Touch

Respite from all this endeavor comes on Sunday morning, when the people of The Farm congregate in a meadow for their religious services: a period of meditation followed by a group chant and a talk by Gaskin. In the Sunday morning services, the "Za Zen" meditation lasted for about forty-five minutes. It could be described as an attempt to go outside of oneself to achieve personal insights ("to find out what's in you . . . among other things, God") and to obtain a feeling of group unity. The eerie silence was suddenly broken by a deep-throated hum from several hundred throats; the "om chant." The

unearthly sound varied in intensity and pitch, and its depth and vibration seemed almost tactile. In fact, Gaskin described it as a sort of "verbal touch," a subconscious, selfless form of communication, "a way of saying, 'we're all here together'."

Gaskin is essential to The Farm as the focal point and the center of their spiritual community. Cognizant of this fact, he mentioned that if he were to "sell out" in some way, The Farm would collapse. During services, he stood above the crowd, speaking slowly and calmly about a variety of subjects. His tall, gaunt frame seemed to suggest a greater concern for spiritual matters than for physical needs. His words had a hypnotic quality; it was easy to see partly how he can exercise so great an influence over a large number of people.

He spoke of the nature of the religious discipline of The Farm. He said that the members of the farm, by adhering completely to their discipline in various ways (giving their money to the community as a whole, their vegetarian diet, their "clean" agricultural relationship with God) were "doing God's work." An anti-materialistic principle was then discussed by Gaskin: "The idea of the Greater Society . . . is that you can't put your trust in people, so you got to put your trust in things—in money, in safe doors, in CIA men with spears, or 45's, or magnums, or whatever. The reason you don't have a trust fund for one kid on The Farm and not for the rest of them is because we will take care of all of our kids. How come? 'cause we love us all. What is our wealth? Our love."

He also emphasized the need of subordination of self in human relationships: "A lot of the conflict in the world is from ego saying, 'There ain't anything heavier than ego,' and the collective of everyone else saying, 'No one ego is that heavy.'"

Touch and Black Leather Stockings

According to Gaskin, another means of creating honest, genuine human relationships can be found

in "touch". It is a means of communication between two people. For example, "If you handle your baby and pet him and love him very friendly-like, except when you are changing his diapers, then you handle him like he's something filthy, you're making a statement to him." He elaborated upon genuine touch as a means of communication, "a transmission of information": "If I touch you, it's a pretty intimate touch. . . If I get a hold of you, I'm going to grab hold of something and feel it and squeeze it and see what it feels like—a roll of fat, a chunk of muscle, or something. It's partly love and partly a direct teaching—that that kind of touch, then you don't have to get into black leather stockings and stuff."

A Little More Together

On a more material plane, a primary concern of The Farm is providing food for the needy. The members of The Farm obtained a state charter for a corporation called Plenty, which oversees the distribution of this food. This concern is shared by sixteen smaller branch farms across the nation which maintain close ties with the original commune. When asked about the future of The Farm and its branches, Gaskin replied, "I think we're going to get a little more together as we go along. And we're going to have more farms in more places and to be able to move more food to more people."

* * *

As the visitors were leaving, all five were suddenly convulsed with laughter: "Ha ha ha . . . these freaks . . . ha ha . . . living out in the woods . . . ha ha . . . using outhouses . . . ha ha ha . . . Let's go to McDonald's and get some good 'ole meaty burgers, I'm about to starve." But the laughter was not really derisive, and the words were not meant seriously. Something else happened: a simultaneous release of tension, a feeling of relief at putting some distance between themselves and The Farm's particular brand of sanity. After all, it seems to be contagious.



Gaskin chats with disciple.

Viewpoints

How can law and order be restored?

From the Left

By Ben Cohen

The last two administrations were elected on the promise to give law and order to the American people. To keep their promise, successive Republican presidents have encouraged freer use of wiretaps, evasion of legal "technicities" in court, increased FBI activity, and a neat legal trick whereby the police could jail anyone they wanted to for any length of time because he might commit a crime in the future. Despite all this, because of these programs, the Republicans haven't delivered. From 1969 on, the number of crimes committed in this country has increased by 9.14 per cent annually, a much higher rate than in the "last" Johnson years. By any standard imaginable, the GOP's anti-crime programs have been a fraud and their slogan of "Law and Order" a mockery. What is the reason for this?

Did these measures fail because you cannot bug, shadow, or preventively detain the tens of thousands of pickpockets, shoplifters, and thieves who cause the bulk of American crime? No, nothing as trivial as all that. It was the Supreme Court Justices the President nominated and the Federal judges he appoints. They were soft on the suspects the Government had caught and held responsible for 6 per cent of American crime. What about the 94 per cent of all crimes they could not catch suspects for? And what, by the way, are the real causes of crime?

1) Prisons: Prisons are called correctional institutions because they are supposed to reform rather than punish! They are more accurately called schools for crime because any attempts to improve the appalling conditions in our penal system leads to re-



May and Cohen debate the issues.

publican comments about prison not being a free hotel. So, in between the beatings, knifings, and rape that characterize our national system of free hotels, first offenders learn all the newest crime techniques. And when they are released, they use them.

2) Gun control: It is easier to shoot someone in America than anywhere else in the world. In 1969, eighty-five percent of the population wanted to do something about that and saw the obvious solution: gun control. States that restrict the sale of handguns have half as many murders as comparable states that lack such regulations. Standing squarely against this crime fighting method, however, are the National Rifle Association and two Republican Presidents. They quote the Constitution:

"A well-organized militia being necessary to the public good, the right to bear arms shall not be infringed upon."

New York's 30,000 armed criminals are, of course, a very well-organized militia.

3) Poverty: Poor people must eat, sleep, and be housed. If they can't live legally, they steal: 45 times more crime occurs in poor areas than in rich ones. The obvious alternative, to make it legally possible to live, doesn't occur to an orthodox Republican. Nixon and Ford have destroyed countless programs and have cut thousands of relief rolls to make sure that the .684 per cent of welfare recipients HEW says cheat don't get a free ride.

No one supports lawlessness in society, or even lax enforcement of the law. The question is whether you want rational and humane solutions to the causes of crime or the same ludicrous programs and boring rhetoric we've had for the past seven years from a party which cannot abide by the law itself, much less enforce it for others.

From the Right
By Andy May

Though I fully expected to be amazed by Mr. Cohen's crime fighting scheme, there was no way that I could have foreseen the resulting travesty.

Of the three statements that Mr. Cohen makes, the last is clearly the most serious and the most plainly false. Crime simply cannot be linked to poverty. The statistics refute the relation categorically. During the wild and wooly days of Tricky D., only one statistic climbed faster than crime: the amount of money distributed to the poor. The num-

THE BELL RINGER

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ber of poor people has been decreased by millions in the last decade, and the amount of money dispersed to those remaining has skyrocketed exponentially. According to the "Cohen approach," crimes should have dropped correspondingly—clearly, it has not. This comparison of crime rate to wealth can be extended over a considerable period of time. At the turn of the century, America had a majority of poor, yet crime was negligible by today's standards.

The next seventy years saw

the American standard of living climb to heights unprecedented in world history, but crime, instead of disappearing into the billowy cloud of affluence, grew

to monstrous proportions. To suggest that still more welfare increases will miraculously reverse

the upward trend in crime strains logic to the breaking point.

The other policies which Mr.

Cohen suggests, prison reform and gun control, are typical of the panacean programs of the classic twentieth-century liberal.

The assumption is made that enough

federal spending and intervention

will conquer any human problem

from flat feet to post-natal drip.

Again, the facts simply do not

support such a liberal approach.

Prison reform is an idea that even

most left-wingers are, of late, re-

jecting. Rehabilitation schemes

have failed miserably from coast

to coast and around the globe.

In Japan, where rehabilitation

has been a major priority, no de-

crease in repeated offenses has

been observed. In fact, Japanese

recidivism rates are no lower

than those in France, where no

attempts at rehabilitation are ever

made. Apparently, expensive, job-

oriented rehabilitation programs

have no effect. This opinion is

voiced by many in the corrections

field itself, including James Smith

of the U.S. Legal Aid Society,

who points out that "American

attempts to reform felons have

had little or no effect on rates of

recidivism."

Gun control is quite easily the

most rational of Ben's lines of

analysis. He is correct in stating

that America is the place to be if

you want to shoot thy neighbor.

In fact, the basic concept of gun

control is one to which I have few

objections. In this case, it is not

the idea but the application of

gun control which makes the policy

unworkable. Put simply, there is

no way to enforce a law limiting the availability of guns

in America. We have had enough

experience in similar areas to be

quite sure of control's result.

Prohibition in the twenties and

thirties and more modern at-

tempts to enforce marijuana laws

have proven that enforcement

officials are unable to curb the

sale of commodities which the

people desire. All that gun control

would accomplish is a further

jamping with petty offenders of

our already swamped judicial

system.

The deeper one delves into the

world of crime control, the more

apparent it becomes that the stock

liberal solutions are frauds. The

cause of crime is considerably

more subtle than poverty, ill-

administered prisons, and a sur-

feit of firearms. The cause of

crime is in fact a fundamental

shift in the American psyche. We

are no longer the optimistic, in-

dependent people of a century,

or even a half century ago. To-

day, the nation is gripped by a

"psychology of entitlement"

which has been fostered by an

increasingly maternal national

government. We are people who

feel inherently deserving, regard-

less of the amount which we

produce. This attitude spawns

crime by its very nature and its

remedy, a return to personal in-

dependence, is virtually precluded

by the nature of politics. Such

a return will be achieved, not by

more welfare programs, not by

more social legislation, but by

less. When government surrenders

power, when personal responsi-

bility is restored, then, as if by a

miracle, crime will drop to its

former lows; but there is little

doubt that people like Cohen still

won't understand why.



School Spirit of '76



Fifteen Merit semifinalists named

Front Row: Charles Weesner, Ken Witt, Trip Doss, Carter Williams, Justin Milam, Charles Elliott, and Chan Preston; Back Row: Phil Howell, John Rebrovick, Ben May, Brion Friedman, Wayne Hucaby, Matt Cowan, and Oman Weiland; Not Pictured: Bradford Hooker.

DJ evaluates KDA-FM

By Ben May

Many an MBA student's radio is permanently fixed at 103 on the FM dial. This spot is more specifically WKDA-FM in Nashville. In order to obtain some general information about this station, *The Bell Ringer* interviewed a part-time KDA disc jockey named Moby.

When speaking of an FM station, one naturally tries to find the ways it is different from an AM station. Having worked in both AM and FM, Moby had some strong thoughts on this subject. He pointed, first of all, to the great freedom he possesses at FM 103. His program director gives him no definite schedule of songs to be played on the air and restricts him only in that he must play the station's records. On the other hand, at his AM stations, Moby was under a much more rigid schedule as to what he could and could not do because of the promotional aspects of AM radio. KDA-FM is not involved with the promotion of single records

as the AM stations are with their top-forty formats. As Moby says, "Many AM stations can just wear out a song, and after a while it begins to lose its appeal. At FM 103, our promotion is strictly with albums."

Moby feels that the FM listening is, on the whole, more intelligent than the followers of AM radio. He says, "At KDA, I don't have to insult my listeners with such gimmicks as exaggerated voice inflection and other superficial tactics which really get tiresome after a while. With my freedom, I can try to be funny; and if it works out a little corny, I can say, 'Hey, that was corny!' You just don't do that on AM radio."

The philosophy behind KDA-FM's programming is to take the listener on a musical trip with its progressive rock format. Progressive rock is a continuous flow of music in a logical progression. In essence, the mood of the various tunes should not change drastically from song to song. Moby states, "You wouldn't go from Pink Floyd's 'Dark Side of the Moon' into 'Me and Julio' by Paul Simon. The mood of a program may be mellow or heavy depending usually on the mood of the DJ."

In discussing the qualities of a good disc jockey, Moby lists creativity and imagination above voice quality which he feels is extremely over-emphasized. He states that it is of imperative importance that a disc jockey be "loose" and carefree on the air. He points out, "If you're really bothered or depressed it can show on the air. If your mother just died and you can go in and sound like it's Saturday afternoon and you're feelin' fine, then you're a pro."

Modern adaptation of Holmes receives praise

By Marshall Summar

This section is designed to enhance reading enjoyment by informing the reader of the books available. The books in this section have each been given a personal evaluation as well as a rating on a scale from 1-10, one being the lowest rating a book can receive and ten the highest. This rating is based on the plot of the story, the readability of the book, the interest to the reader, and the quality of the book (content-wise, that is).

Starship Troopers, Robert Heinlein

This is possibly Heinlein's best effort. The story deals with the training and experiences of a soldier in the startling army of the future. He belongs to a branch of the service called the Mobile Infantry, which makes the Marine Corps look like a pack of two-year-olds. (10)

The Puppet Masters, Robert Heinlein

A picture of the shocking events of an invasion of mind controlling slugs, the book deals with the struggle of the free-thinking humans trying to rid the planet of this menace. A very suspenseful, action-packed plot keeps the reader constantly on edge. (9)

Best Book

The Seven-Percen Solution, Nicholas Meyer, (Ballantine Books)

Careful preparation paid off in this book which is probably the best novel of the year. This novel shows the reader the familiar side of Sherlock Holmes and one which has never been presented before. In the tradition of the great Doyle classics, once again the matchless powers of observation and de-

duction of Holmes battle the forces of crime; however, the main theme of the story is Holmes' cocaine addiction. The novel portrays Holmes as a man totally in the possession of a terrible drug habit which he must either break or die from. Holmes does not fight alone, though, for his long-time friend and companion Dr. Watson, with the help of Holmes' brother Mycroft, dupes Holmes into following a false trail based

on his hallucinations which leads him to Vienna. In Vienna, he becomes the patient of none other than Sigmund Freud. Holmes recovery seems doubtful until he becomes involved in a case which brings back the vitality to the detective's mind. The case brings Holmes and his extraordinary powers into the circles of European politics where he must try to prevent events which could lead to wide-scale war. (10+)

Record reviews

Fogelberg, Springsteen score LP triumphs

By Ike Simon

Dan Fogelberg has come out with a long-awaited third album, **Captured Angel**, which is certainly destined to become his most successful effort yet. Born and raised in Tennessee, Fogelberg previewed much of this fine album at his homecoming concert here last summer. The album opens with a string instrumental "Aspen" and quickly moves into the fast-paced "These Days," a personal statement bolstered by strong guitar back-ups. "Old Ten-

nessee," a very mellow, slow tune, is probably the most pleasing song on the lp and eventually will become a classic. If it is possible to have two classics on a single album, "Next Time" in which Fogelberg teams with John David Souther, also must be considered. Other notable tunes include "Below the Surface," which incorporates a debt blending of acoustic and electric guitars, and the title cut, which includes some good advice: "Fly now... while your wings are still young." With **Captured Angel**, it seems that Fogelberg will continue to improve upon his mellow sound. Bruce Springsteen, the "rock

'n' roll" punk, supposedly the next Dylan, and a product of the "greaser rebellion" of the 1950's, has finally gained the recognition he deserves with his highly publicized **Born to Run**. This nostalgic album was released in August and has recently become gold. "Thunder Road" is a nice mixture of piano and electric guitar—"It's a town full of losers, and I'm pulling out of here to win." "Tenth Avenue Freeze-Out," "Backstreets," and the title cut ("We gotta get out while we're young" cause tramps like us, baby we were born to run") all reminiscent of the fifties, giving the album a pervasive, nostalgic flavor. "Jungleland," the best tune on the album, mixes Springsteen's rasping voice with Roy Bittan's keyboard expertise for a very

effective blend. Hopefully, Springsteen's sudden rise to superstardom will not be short-lived, and we should expect some more unique efforts from this rising artist.

A major disappointment is George Harrison's **Extra Texture**. The creative juices just don't seem to be flowing like they used to in the **All Things Must Pass**, **Loving in the Material World**, and **Dark Horse** albums. The lp is salvaged by the pleasing "You" his current hit. Other songs with merit include "Tired of Midnight Blue," with Leon Russell on piano, and "His Name Is Legs (Ladies and Gentlemen)," with Billy Preston on electric piano. Harrison is usually a brilliant songwriter, and he will hopefully rebound from this sub-par effort.

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Big Red completes 5-5 season



Burch eschews Northwest tacklers.

Hard-hitting defense, sporadic offense, and one of the toughest schedules in the school's history characterized the 1975 football season. The team came out with a 5-5 overall record and 3-2 in the NLL Western Division.

Following an 18-0 opening loss to McGavock, MBA bounced back with a 20-14 overtime victory over second-ranked Overton. The defense came through with clutch fumble recoveries while the offense enjoyed its best point total of the season.

Trailing 14-6 late in the game, MBA recovered an Overton fumble and on the next play, John McWhirter raced 33 yards for the tying score. In overtime, Mc-

Whirter scored from 4 yards out, and the defense held to preserve the hard-fought win.

Using two fourth quarter touchdowns, the team next defeated Clarksville Northwest; however, the Big Red then lost to powerful Maplewood 39-12 and sputtered offensively in a 14-6 loss to Antioch.

Faced with a turning point of the season, MBA surprised the Midstate with a well-played 12-0 win over Springfield. The offense faltered after an opening touchdown against Hillsboro, but the defense held on for the 7-0 victory.

B.G.A. used a third quarter

touchdown to halt the Big Red as the offense slowed and the defense played well in the 7-0 loss. Using two consecutive second half drives, MBA then defeated Pearl 15-8.

Finishing the season in a game with Ryan, the Big Red fell to the Irish 46-15, as the defense could not contain the explosive Ryan offense.

MBA's team has produced two college prospects. Steve Burch has been named on the list of top prospects in the state. Scouts have also looked at Mike Ralston, an All-State tight-end and experienced punter.

Looking to next year, Coach Ray Ridgway will be counting on returning lettermen Lee Edmondson, Ralph Moore, Raymond Lackey, and others to improve on this year's record.

Freshman, J. S. elections held

The results of elections held last month in the Freshman Class and Junior School are:

Freshman Class	
President—Erich Gross	7B
Vice-President—Richard Smith	Mike Henderson
Secretary—Chris Crow	Pen Caldwell
Honor Council representatives—John Coleman and Paul Wicks	Matt Cassel
SS	7N
Pres—Josh May	Jimmy Hester
V.P.—George Cheij	Scott Tunc
Sec.—Tom Moore	Johnny Wagster
SD	7J
Pres—Joe Anderson	Don Brothers
V.P.—Murray Hatcher	Stan Hardaway
Sec.—Bob Calton	Curt Mitchell
SR	
Pres—Chris Whitson	Phillip Altenber
V.P.—Bill Herbert	Kevin Smith
Sec.—David Molesworth	
Junior School Student Council	
Junior School Honor Council	

Junior School Honor Council—Kevin Smith

CC team places third in NIL

Surpassing performances of recent years, the cross country team, led by senior co-captains Ken Witt and Brion Friedman, compiled a 10-4 record in regular competition.

The achievements of the team were highlighted by a third place finish in the NLL championship meet, ninth place in the Lipscomb Invitational, and seventh place in the A. F. Bridges Invitational.

Witt, the NLL champion, set a new school record of 15:17 for

three miles. Also running well for coaches Drake and Havely were Friedman, thirteenth in the city; freshman Craig Stewart, sixteenth; and Ed Archon, twentieth. In addition, the support from Jeff Glezer, Billy Anderson, Jimmy O'Neill, and Bennett White reflected the team's depth.

Coach Havely's innovation of speed work and weightlifting proved of great assistance to Coach Drake in the progression of this team that will have most of its members returning next year.



Witt wins NIL

Winter squads show promise

Hopes are high for the success of this year's soccer, basketball, and wrestling teams.

Returning exactly half of last year's squad, Coach John Bennett's basketball team shows promise for a good season. Beneficial to the cagers will be the height of Mike Ralston, Brad Hooker, and Mike Farmer and also the outside shooting ability of Kirk Witt and John Hill.

The soccer team, under the leadership of coaches Michael Drake and John Lanier, will attempt to defend last year's state championship title. Despite the loss of several key players, the soccer team returns many players with valuable experience such as Brion Friedman, Boyd Gibbs, Les

Coble, David Schull, Albert Brown, and Don Orr.

In wrestling, ten of twelve starters return in the hopes of compiling a successful season under Head Coach Danny Buck. The experience of five seniors—Jerry Patterson, Fred McLaughlin, Michael Huddleston, Clay Whitson, and Oman Weiland—along with the promise of younger wrestlers should provide a certain degree of success, especially in tournament competition.

News capsules

Microbe Sports

Coach Bill Compton's microbe football team finished the regular season with an unblemished 5-0 record. Important wins included victories over Brentwood Academy, B.G.A., and Franklin Road Academy. This year's team became the first in MBA history to gain sole possession of the H.V.A.C. football championship.

The microbe cross country team once again succeeded in winning the H.V.A.C. Having now defended their title for the third consecutive year, coach Frank Novak's squad completed its season without a single loss.

The seventh grade football team, after a slow start, finished the season with a 2-2 record. Early losses came against two

tough Junior Pro teams, but the seventh graders bounced back with wins over Ensworth and B.G.A.

Spaghetti Supper

Over \$12,000 was raised in this year's spaghetti supper, which was successfully organized by the Ladies' Auxiliary.

Led by co-chairwomen Mrs. Sara Regen and Mrs. Jane Hanon, hundreds of mothers and high school girls were able to feed the several thousand people who came despite the rainy weather.

Most of the money was brought by the students, who sold a total of \$11,300 in tickets. Since each class averaged over \$22 per person, the entire school received a holiday the following Monday.



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